unbounded resources might govern the universe. According to the well-known Theodicee of Leibnitz, God had had before him, in the depths of eternity, an infinite number of possible worlds, and out of these selected the one which was most beneficent, upon the whole, and this though it comprised within it certain incidental but necessary evils, not found in other possible worlds, which, however, had not the same amount of good. Whatever may be thought of this ingenious speculation, it is evident that God might have governed the universe in a different mode from that actually employed. It is conceivable, in particular, that he might have ordered the affairs of this world in some other way than by the method of general laws.

Superficial thinkers, disposed to materialism and atheism, are apt to conclude that there is a necessity of some kind for the existence of these laws. But we have only to view this world from the point from which God surveyed it at its creation, to discover that it was at least possible for God to act alter a different method. The determination to govern the world by general laws was an act of the Divine mind, Bwaycd by all-wise*, reasons and motives, and not at all by stern necessity.

It does not even appear that, in selecting such a method, God could have boon influenced by considerations of convenience. On a cursory view, we might be tempted to conclude that (jod must have adopted such a mode of operation In order to li^lifon the burden of his government. But in drawing this inference, we proceed on ideas derived from human weakness The ingenious workman constructs a machine, and then leaves it to itself; and we leap to the conclusion that, after having created arid adjusted the world, God consigned it to its own operation. But the two cases, including the parties employed and the circumstances, are essentially different. The

human workman forms no laws or properties of matter—his whole object in to accommodate his materials to the existing lawn of nature which now accomplish his purposes.* He has dincovcred that certain agents of nature, or, as we would rather express it, certain agents of God, will serve his ends; he skilfully taken advantage of them and his work, is done. But in thin lie is acting merely as the traveller or the merchant, who uses a particular conveyance

* Ad opera nil aliud potent homo qiiuui ut. corpora nuturaUa adzuovcat el a»io-veat, reliqiia naturn intu» irttMsi&U.~~(Nov. Org. Aph, Jii.)